

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR"

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

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VERONICA.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "AUNT MARGARET'S TROUBLE."
IN FIVE BOOKS.

BOOK V.

CHAPTER VIII. AN AWKWARD IDIOM.

"BUT, I assure you, I suffer unspeakably from nervous depression! You don't know how I sink down like a leaden weight dropped into water sometimes. It is the most dreadful feeling! And besides, I take scarcely anything. A glass or two of champagne at dinner is the only thing that keeps me up!"

"It seems to me that the reaction you complain of feeling ought to be sufficient to convince you that even the small quantity of wine you take is doing you harm instead of good."

"Ah, bah! I don't believe you understand the case."

Veronica threw herself back on her chair with the pettish air of a spoiled child.

Mr. Plew sat opposite to her, very grave, very quiet. He had put aside all her gracious coquetries, and entered into her reason for sending for him, in a manner so entirely unexpected by her, that for some time she could not credit her senses, but kept awaiting the moment when he should go back to being the Mr. Plew of old days. At last when she found he persisted in his serious demeanour, she lost her temper, and showed that she had lost it.

But not even this change of mood availed to shake Mr. Plew's steadiness. And gradually a vague fear stole over her. He looked at her so earnestly with something so like compassion in his eyes! Good God, was she *really* very ill? Did his practised observation discern latent malady of which she was herself uncon-

scious? Was the weariness and depression of soul from which she did in truth suffer but the precursor of bodily disease, perhaps even of—? She shuddered with a very unaffected terror, and her smiles, and archings of the brow, and haughty curvings of the lip, and pretty, false grimaces, dropped away from her face like a mask.

"Do you think I am ill?" she asked, with dilated eyes.

"Do not you think so, since you sent for me?"

"Yes, yes; but I mean *very* ill—seriously ill, you know! You look so strange!"

"I do not think you are well, madam."

"What—is—it?" she asked, faintly.

"You must tell me the truth. But there can't be danger. Don't tell me if you think so! It would only frighten me. And of course I know it's all nonsense. And you *will* tell me the truth, won't you?"

Her self-possession was all gone. The unreasoning terror of disease and death, which she inherited from her mother, had taken hold upon her.

The egotism which enabled her so effectually to resist the sorrows and sufferings of others, beyond a mere transitory movement of dilettante sentiment, made her terribly, exquisitely sensitive to her own.

"Don't be alarmed," said Mr. Plew, gently. "There is no need."

"Why do you look so, then? And speak so? I have never been ill since I was a child—not really ill. It would be so dreadful to be ill now!"

The tears were absolutely in her eyes as she spoke. In the presence of a stranger she might have succeeded in commanding herself more, but with Mr. Plew she did not even attempt to do so.

It pained him greatly to see her tears.

"There is really no cause for your distress," he said. "You are frightening yourself quite needlessly."

"You said I was not well," she answered, in a tone of peevish reproach.

"You have no ailment that a little care and common sense will not cure. You do not live a healthy life. You do not take sufficient exercise. You were accustomed in your girlhood to walk, and to be out in the open air. There is something febrile and over-strained about you."

"I can't walk. You see that I am easily tired—that I want support. I have no appetite. I am not so strong as I was."

"You will never be stronger unless you shake off the habits of inertness and languor that have crept over you."

"I am not languid when there is anything to interest or excite me. But what am I to do when I feel bored to death?"

"Boredom" was not a disease with which Mr. Plew's village practice had made him familiar.

"If you were to get up at six o'clock, and take a walk before breakfast, I am sure you would feel the benefit of it," said he, very simply.

Veronica's panic was passing away. A disorder that could be alleviated by getting up and walking out at six o'clock in the morning was evidently, she conceived, not of an alarming nature.

"My dear Mr. Plew," she said, with a little faint smile, "you are accustomed to prescribe for Shipley constitutions. Now, Shipley people, amongst other charming qualities, are famous for robustness; if I were to say *rude* health, you would think I was malicious. As for me, such violent proceedings as you speak of would simply kill me. Can't you give me something to—keep me up a little? Some—some—what is the proper technicality?—some stimulants—isn't that the word?"

"Fresh air is an excellent stimulant: the best I know."

Veronica looked at his candid, simple face searchingly. She looked once, and withdrew her eyes. Then she looked again, and the second time she waved her hand as though dismissing something.

"Let us talk no more of my nonsensical ailments," she said. "I ought to be ashamed of myself for having brought you here to listen to the recital of them."

"No, Veronica—I beg pardon. No; do not say that. I hope you will send for me whenever you think I can be of use. It would be more to me than, perhaps, you

can imagine, to know that I was of real use to you, and that you relied on me."

Her face brightened. This was more like the tone she had expected from her old adorer. Poor little Plew! Yes; she really did like him very much. After all, there was something touching in his humble worship.

She made answer with a soft, liquid, beaming glance of her beautiful eyes: "My dear, good Mr. Plew—we always were good friends in the old days, were we not?—I think I gave you proof once upon a time that I relied on you. I have never had an opportunity of saying to you how grateful I was, and am, and always shall be, for your forwarding that letter!"

She held out her jewelled hand to him as she spoke, with a gesture of irresistible grace and spontaneity. Mr. Plew was not in the least graceful. He took the slender white hand for an instant, looked at it as though it were some frail, precious thing, which a too rough touch might break or injure, and then gently let it go again.

He liked to hear her speak so, to hear her allude to the "old days," and acknowledge so candidly her obligation regarding that letter he had sent to Maud (the outer cover, with its few words addressed to himself, was treasured in a little rosewood box, which was the only repository, except the chest in the surgery containing poisons, that Mr. Plew ever locked). It showed a heart still unspoiled, still capable of generous movements. Poor Mr. Plew!

Veronica saw the impression she had made. Without conscious and deliberate duplicity, but from sheer habit and instinct, she assumed the tone most of all adapted to win the surgeon's admiration. He was not quite so meek and so weak, not quite so easily dazzled by tinsel glories, as she had been wont to think him. She had made a little mistake with her airs of "bonne princesse" and spoiled child.

Now she was all feeling, all candour, all ingenuous confidence. She had suffered much, very much. She had too much pride to appeal to the sympathies of the envious vulgar. To strangers she presented a front as cold and impassible as their own. So few had enough nobility of nature to be exempt from love of detraction. Her rank! Well, her husband was of her own kindred. Her mother had been a Barletti. Those who grudged her her social elevation did not know that, in accepting it, she was but assuming the rank of her ancestors. But all that was of

trifling consequence to her. She had married Cesare because he was devoted to her, and because she was grateful and really—yes, really—attached to him. No one knew the real facts of her story. Those were between herself and one who was gone for ever. If she revealed them the world would understand and forgive much that it had judged harshly. No matter. She was incapable of stooping to make such an appeal to those whom her heart did not value. With a true friend it was different. She had never yet spoken to any one as she was speaking then to Mr. Plew.

He took his leave in a state of bewilderment, out of which only three clear convictions arose, namely, that Veronica Levincourt had been more unhappy than culpable, that her beauty was the least of her attractive and lovable qualities, and that few of her sex would be capable of her magnanimous candour.

As he stood for an instant, hat in hand, in the doorway, Veronica resolved to put the crowning spell on her enchantments.

"Do you know what I mean to do, Mr. Plew?" said she, with a smile of mingled sweetness and melancholy. "I mean to drive over to-morrow afternoon and see your good mother. She must not think I have forgotten her."

Mr. Plew almost staggered. If a reservoir of ice-cold water had been opened above his head, he could scarcely have been for the moment more disconcerted.

"Oh, no, no, you mustn't!" he exclaimed, with as hasty an impulse of fright and apprehension as though the Princess de' Barletti had been about to transport herself into his cottage that instant.

"Mustn't!" echoed Veronica, thinking he had misunderstood her. "I must not do what?"

"I don't mean 'must not,' of course. And it is very good and kind of you to think of it. But, I think—I believe—I should advise—in fact you had better not."

"Why?" demanded Veronica, more puzzled than offended by the unceremonious rejection of her proffered condescension.

"Because—Well—my mother is a dear, good woman. No son ever had a better mother, and I love her and respect her with all my heart. But—she is old; and old people are not easily persuaded. And she has some notions and prejudices which cannot be overcome; and I should be sorry to treat them roughly. I would it were otherwise: but—I think you had better not come to see us."

Veronica understood it all now.

"Poor dear old soul!" said she, with a compassionate smile. "I did not know she had grown too feeble to see people."

"She did not comprehend—she misunderstood my meaning about mother," thought Mr. Plew, as he walked slowly and meditatively out of the inn-yard. "Perhaps it is all the better. It would only have hurt her to know the truth."

Meanwhile the subject of his reflections was pondering with knit brows, flushed cheek, and tightly-closed lips, on the incredible and infuriating circumstance that "that ignorant, low-born, idiotic old woman" should dare to refuse to receive the Princess Cesare de' Barletti!

When Cesare returned that evening from Hammick Lodge, and gave his wife an account of Lord George's dinner-party, which he said had been exceedingly pleasant, he appealed to her for enlightenment as to an English phrase which had puzzled him.

"English!" said Veronica, conveying into her voice and manner a skilful mingling of insolence and indifference—for Mr. Plew's revelation had galled her unspeakably, and she was by no means in an amiable mood. "You don't mean to say that you tried to speak English?"

"Yes, I tried!" answered Cesare simply. "But Lorgiorgio speaks French pretty well, and so did some of the others. So I was not embarrassed to make myself understood. And, do you know, signora mia, that I make progress in my English! Per Bacco, I shall soon be an accomplished Cockani!"

"An accomplished *what*?—Cockney? How ineffably absurd you are, Cesare!"

"Tante grazie! You don't spoil one with compliments! But listen: what do they mean when they say that one wears a tight corset?"

"How can I *guess* what you have in your head? Who says so? I suppose that if any one says so, he means simply what the words convey."

"Niente! Not at all! There is another meaning. You shall judge. There was a young man at dinner named Snō. I remembered that name—Signor Neve! What a comical patronymic! Well, Signor Snō asked me if we had seen much of your friend Miss Desmond since we had been in this place. He spoke in French. And I told him no; we had not had that pleasure, for she was visiting in the house of some friends. Then a man—a great hunter of the fox, Lorgiorgio told me—laughed, and said to Snō in English, 'No, no. They

took Miss Desmond out of the way. They did not want her to have anything to say to the princess. They are too—I cannot remember the word, but I know it meant——”

“Strait-laced?” suggested Veronica, with flashing eyes, and quickly-heaving bosom.

“Ecco! Precisely! And now what did he mean by saying that the friends in question were too tight-laced?”

“He meant—— He meant to be insolent, and odious, and insulting! How could Lord George permit such audacious impertinence in your presence?”

“Eh?” exclaimed Cesare, greatly amazed. “I had no idea! I thought it was a jest! Lorgiorgio called out to the man to take some wine and stop his mouth. The others did not laugh, it is true,” he added reflectively. “And they looked at me oddly.”

“I will not stay another day in this hateful, barbarous, boorish den!” cried Veronica. And then she burst into a passion of angry tears.

“Diavolo!” muttered Cesare, staring at her in much consternation. “Explain to me, cara mia, what it means exactly, this accursed tight-lacing!”

“I have told you enough,” returned Veronica, through her tears. “Don’t for Heaven’s sake begin to tease me! I cannot bear it.”

“Listen, Veronica,” said Cesare, stroking down his moustache with a quick, lithe movement of the hand that was strangely suggestive of cruelty, “you must answer me. Ladies do not understand these things. But if your red-faced chaser of the fox permitted himself an impertinence in my presence at the expense of my wife—he must receive a lesson in good manners.”

“Cesare! I hope you have no absurd notion in your head of making a scandal.”

“No; I shall merely correct one.”

“Cesare! Cesare! you surely are not indulging in any wild idea of—— Oh, the thing is too ridiculous to be thought of. Entirely contrary to our modern manners and customs——”

“Giuro a Dio!” exclaimed her husband, seizing her wrist, “don’t preach to me, but answer, do you hear?”

The sudden explosion of animal fury in his face and voice frightened her so thoroughly, that she was for the moment incapable of obeying him.

“Oh, for Heaven’s sake, Cesare! Don’t look so! You—you startle me. What is it you want? Oh my poor head, how it

throbs! Wait an instant. Well—the foolish word means—means—I hardly know what I’m saying—it means strict, prudish, collet-monté. What that man was saying—I dare say he was not quite sober—was that the Sheardowns were too prudish and particular to like Maud to associate with me. There, I have told you. And I’ll never forgive you, Cesare, for behaving in this way to me, never!”

Cesare dropped her wrist. “Che, che!” he said. “Is that all? Diamine, it seems to me that the impertinence was to those others, not to you. Do we want the visits of prudes and ‘colli torti’! And you cry for that? Women, women, who can understand you?”

Veronica gathered her draperies together and swept out of the room with her face buried in her handkerchief. She told her maid that she had a violent headache. And her maid told Dickinson that she was sure “monsieur and madame” had been having a dreadful quarrel; which announcement Mr. Dickinson received with the profoundly philosophical remark; “Oh! Well, you know, they’d have had to begin some time or other.”

And the prince lit a cigar, and leaned out of window to smoke it, partly penitent and partly cross. And as he smoked, he could not help thinking how very much pleasanter and jollier it had been at Hammick Lodge, than it was in the best sitting-room of the Crown; and how utterly impossible it was to calculate on the capricious and unreasonable temper of his wife.

NUMBER SEVEN.

NUMBER seven is more favoured in the world than any other digit. It is true that, in a certain conventional sense, Number One is said to occupy more of each man’s attention; but, this selfish aspect set aside, the palm must certainly be given in, all other respects to Number Seven. The favoritism of this number is variously explained: Ingpen, in 1624, satisfied himself of the super-excellence of Number Seven in the following ingenious way: “It is compounded of one and six, two and five, three and four. Now every one of these being excellent of themselves (as hath been demonstrated), how can this number but be far more excellent, consisting of them all, and participating as it were of all their excellent virtues?” Number Seven was largely used by the Hebrew Biblical writers, both in the plain ordinary sense and in a

typical or figurative manner. Besides the seven days of the week, there were Jewish feasts or festivals connected with a period of seven weeks; seven times seven years constituted a jubilee or period of rejoicing; the candlestick of Moses had seven branches, &c. Then there are the many passages relating in various ways, and at different eras in the Biblical narrative, to the Seven Churches of Asia, the Seven Wise Men, the Seven Gifts of the Holy Ghost, the Seventh Day of the Seventh Month, the freeing of bondmen in the Seventh Year, the Seven Mysterious Seals, the Seven Symbolical Trumpets, the Seven Heads of the Dragon, the Seven Angels, the Seven Witnesses, &c. The Roman Catholic Church is rich in Number Seven, in doctrine and in ritual. There are the Seven Deadly Sins, the Seven Sacraments, the Seven Canonical Hours, the Seven Joys and Seven Sorrows of the Virgin Mary, and the Seven Penitential Psalms. The canonical hours here mentioned are the times fixed for divine service in the churches; they divide the ecclesiastical day into seven parts; and besides having a mystical relation to certain sacred occurrences, they are regarded as symbolising the seven days of creation, the seven times a day that the just man falls, the seven graces of the Holy Spirit, the seven divisions of the Lord's Prayer, and other applications of Number Seven. There is in Lambeth Palace library a manuscript about four centuries old, in which the seven hours are connected with the seven periods of man's life, as follows: morning, infancy; mid-morrow, childhood; undern, school age; midday, the knightly age; noons or high noon, the kingly age; midovernoon, elderly; evenson, declining. It is interesting to compare this with Shakespeare's Seven Ages of Man, as depicted by melancholy Jacques in *As You Like It*. There is a still older MS. illuminated in an elaborate manner. It represents a wheel cut into seven rays, and composed of seven concentric cordons, which with the rays form seven times seven compartments; seven of these compartments contain the Seven Petitions of the Lord's Prayer; seven others, the Seven Sacraments; seven others, the Seven Spiritual Arms of Justice; seven others, the Seven Works of Mercy; seven others, the Seven Virtues; seven others, the Seven Deadly Sins; and the last seven, the Seven Gifts of the Holy Ghost—all beautifully written and painted.

Departing from these serious matters, we find Number Seven in favour in all sorts of mundane and social affairs. There were the Seven Stones of the Arabs, and the Seven Tripods of Agamemnon. There were the Seven Wonders of the World, and the Seven Hills on which more than one celebrated city is said to be built. There were the Seven Planets and the Seven Stars—the former, cruelly disturbed in number and put out of joint by modern astronomical discoveries; the latter, applicable either to the seven principal stars in Orion, or to those in the Great Bear, or to the beautiful little Pleiades. There were the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus, whose sound nap lasted two hundred and twenty-nine years, and who have had companions in the Seven Mohammedan Sleepers, and the Seven Sleepers of the North. We are told that there are seven liberal arts, seven senses, seven notes in music, and seven colours in the rainbow, neither more nor less. For some special inquiries, there is a jury of seven matrons. There used to be, more frequently than at present, a period of seven years' apprenticeship; and many a malefactor has had occasion to know that seven years was a frequent duration for a sentence of transportation. Some years ago, there was a Septuagenarian Club proposed, in which every member was to be seven times ten years old or upwards: all young fellows between sixty-five and seventy entering it simply as cadets. Seven Oaks have, as we know, given a name to a pleasant place in Kent; and Dean Stanley describes seven oaks standing in a line, at a particular spot in Palestine, associated in the minds of the natives with a very strange legend. When Cain (the legend runs) killed his brother Abel, he was punished by being compelled to carry the dead body during the long period of five hundred years, and to bury it in this spot; he planted his staff to mark the spot, and out of this staff grew up the seven oak trees.

Who can tell us anything about the Seven Sisters; the name of seven elm trees at Tottenham, which have also given their name to the road from thence to Upper Holloway? In Bedwell's History of Tottenham, written nearly two hundred and forty years ago, he describes Page-green, by the side of the high road at that village, and a group of seven elm-trees in a circle, with a walnut-tree in the centre. He says: "This tree hath this many yeares stod there, and it is observed yearely to live and beare leavs, and yet to stand at a stay, that is, to

grew neither greater nor higher. This people do commonly tell the reason to be, for that there was one burnt upon that place for the profession of the Gospell." There was also some connecting link between the walnut-tree and the Seven Sisters by which it was surrounded. There were seven elms planted by seven sisters, one by each. The tree planted by the most diminutive of the sisters was always irregular and low in its growth. But now comes another legend of the walnut-tree. There was an eighth sister, who planted an elm in the midst of the other seven; it withered and died when she died, and then a walnut-tree grew in its place. But now the walnut-tree is gone, one of the elms is gone, and the others are gradually withering. In Ireland there is a legend connected with a lonely castle on the coast of Kerry, telling, in like manner, of seven sisters. The lord of the castle was a grim and cruel man, who had seven beautiful daughters. Seven brothers, belonging to a band of Northmen rovers, were cast on that coast, and fell desperately in love with the seven ladies. A clandestine escape was planned; this being discovered, the heartless parent threw all the seven lovely damsels down a chasm into the raging surf below. Something more is known about that paradise of bird-cages, that emporium of birds and bird-lime, that resort of bird-catchers and bird-buyers, Seven-dials. Evelyn, writing in 1694, said: "I went to see the building beginning near St. Giles's, where seven streets make a star from a Doric pillar placed in the middle of a circular area." This erection was said to be seven feet square at the top, had seven faces or sides, and seven sun-dials on those seven faces. The seven dials faced seven streets: Great Earl, Little Earl, Great St. Andrew's, Little St. Andrew's, Great White Lion, Little White Lion, and Queen streets. The pillar and its seven dials were removed about three-quarters of a century ago. Were they not taken to Walton-on-Thames, and are they in existence now?

Those friends of our boyish years, the Seven Champions of Christendom, have been a subject of more learned discussion than most boys—even old boys—would suppose. It would seem a daring question to ask whether Shakespeare condescended to borrow any of his beautiful language, any of his rich imagery, from this book. And yet such a question has been asked. Mr. Keightley, author of the *Fairy Mythology*, started the subject a few years

ago in *Notes and Queries*. It appears that Richard Johnson, the author of the *Seven Champions*, was one of the contemporaries of Shakespeare, and that the book was published at about the same time as many of the plays of our great poet. Let us cite three passages pointed out by Mr. Keightley. The *Champions* say: "As they passed along by the river-side, which, gently running, made sweet music with the enamelled stones, and seemed to give a gentle kiss to every sedge he overtook in his watery pilgrimage." Compare this with a passage in the Second Act of the *Two Gentlemen of Verona*:

The current that with gentle murmur glides.
Thou knowest, being stopped, impatiently doth rage;
But, when his fair course is not hindered,
He makes sweet music with the enamel'd stones,
Giving a gentle kiss to every sedge
He overtaketh in his pilgrimage.

The italicised words in the latter show how many are the points of resemblance in the imagery and language. A second passage runs thus: "Where they found in Duke Ursini, Death's pale flag advanced in his cheeks." With this compare a passage in the Fifth Act of *Romeo and Juliet*:

Beauty's ensign yet
Is crimson in thy lips and in thy cheeks,
And Death's pale flag is not advanced there.

Once more: "It seemed indeed that the leaves wagged, as you may behold when Zephyrus with a gentle breath plays with them." Now turn to the Fourth Act of *Cymbeline*:

As Zephyrus, blowing beneath the violet, not
Wagging his sweet head.

We cannot go into the critical questions of bibliography involved here; but may simply state that an opinion is held by commentators in favour of Johnson having had precedence of Shakespeare in these passages. At any rate, *Number Seven* is very much honoured by such comparisons.

Not the least curious among these associations of *Number Seven*, is that with the seventh son. Whoever has the good fortune to be the father of seven boys, especially if no girl intervene to break the continuity of the series, is to be congratulated forthwith. Let him not talk about too many olive-branches in his garden, or too many arrows in his quiver, or too many little folks around his table: his seventh boy will be a wonder. In the district around Orleans in France, a seventh son, without a daughter intervening, is called a *marcou*. His body is (or is supposed by the peasantry to be) marked in some spot or other with a fleur-de-lis. If

a patient suffering under king's-evil touch the fleur-de-lis, or if the marcou breathe upon him, the malady disappears. Or at least there is so great a popular faith that it *will* do so, that the country people will come from places far and wide to visit a marcou. About fifteen years ago there was one of these persons named Foulon, a cooper, at Ormes, who was greatly sought for his reputed healing powers, especially in Holy Week, and more especially on Good Friday, when his patients reached the number of four or five hundred. As to the origin of the name king's-evil, a manuscript in the University library at Cambridge tells us that "The Kings of England and Fraunce by a peculiar guift cure the king's-evil by touching them with their hands; and so doth the seaventh sonne." It is something to say that a seventh son, in this matter, is as good as a king. Mr. Keightley has found among the Welsh folk-lore an account of a family famous in this way. "Jones was their name, and they lived at a place called Muddfi. In them was said to have originated the tradition of the seventh son, or Septimus, being born for the healing art; as for many generations seven sons were regularly born in each family, the seventh of whom became the doctor, and wonderful in his profession." Steele jested at this belief a century and a half ago, in sarcastic relation to another of the troubles with which men are occasionally visited: "Tipstaff, being a seventh son, used to cure the king's-evil, but his racially descendants are so far from having that healing quality, that by a touch upon the shoulder they give a man such an ill habit of body, that he can never come abroad afterwards."

But if there happen to be a seventh son of a seventh son, the curative powers are much more marvellous. Mr. Carleton, in his story of the Black Prophet, says that the Irish peasantry entertain a very undoubting faith in the reality of these powers. In Cornwall the belief is, in like manner, entertained; the ordeal being that the gifted person should thrice gently stroke the part affected, thrice blow on it, and repeat certain words. At Bristol, some years ago, a tradesman was regularly called Dr. So-and-so, simply because he was the seventh son of a seventh son, and without any relation to his actual trade. Early in the present century, a man perambulated the rural districts of Hampshire to cure the blind, the sick, and the lame. Numerous cures were ascribed to

him, and he had quite a large collection of crutches and walking sticks, said to have been left by his patients who had no longer any need for them. How much was deception, and how much due to the implicit faith placed in him by the ignorant, it might have been difficult to decide; but he was held in much awe and respect on account of his claim to be the seventh son of a seventh son. At Plymouth, not very long ago, was to be seen this inscription on a board:

A. SHEPHERD,
The third seventh daughter,
Doctress.

A Yorkshire lad at a school was purposely intended to study afterwards for the medical profession, because, as he told his school-fellows, "The seventh of the seventh makes the bigg'st o' doctors." Another story is told of an Irish lad who, as an errand boy, was frequently censured for being late in his arrival, and dilatory when on his errands. His excuse on one occasion took the following form: "I'm sure I wouldn't help it, sir, I'm sure I wouldn't. I've only bin on an act o' mercy. Ye see, sir, I'm a seventh of a seventh, an' I touches for sickness, sir, an' I've bin to two childer this morn, sir, a long way." It appeared that he had to touch, fasting, in order that his wonderful properties should be developed; and his palm was crossed by a piece of silver varying in value from a fourpenny piece to half-a-crown, according to the social position of his patients.

THE ROMAN DRAMATISTS.

For the sake of completeness, it has been suggested to us as desirable, that to the succinct account which we have rendered of the Latin poets, some notice of the Roman dramatists should be added. The subject is interesting, and might lead us into much discursive illustration, but we shall restrain all tendency to wander, and confine our remarks within the narrowest limits. We shall seek to give information, not to display the ingenuity of criticism or the felicities of rhetoric. The knowledge we wish to impart is purely elementary.

The first form of literature derived by the Romans from the Greeks was the dramatic; but the regular drama was preceded by rude sports, shows, and recitations, and the singing of national ballads in street processions by the soldiers as they marched, or as they sat at convivial

feasts, and were regaled with instrumental music. Regular dramatic pieces were first exhibited about 240 B.C., but they had to contend with the public shows and spectacles. It is doubtful whether the earliest production, represented at Rome by Livius Andronicus, was a comedy or a tragedy. Whichever it was, the author acted it alone, unhelped by other actors. Being, however, not seldom called upon to repeat certain passages, which caused his voice to become hoarse, he claimed permission of his audience to introduce a boy who should rehearse or sing the lyrical portions to the accompaniment of the flute, reserving to himself only the declamation of the dialogue. Livius Andronicus and Naevius were the first authors of regularly-constructed plays, but it is to Plautus we must look as the father of Roman comedy, and to Terence as the improver. Both imitated the later productions of Greece; indeed, the regular comedy of the Romans was of the kind termed *Palliata*—so called from the Greek habit *pallium*, which the actors wore—because the personages and incidents were Grecian. Their serious and genteel comedy was named *Togate*, from *toga*, the Roman gown, the characters being persons of good rank; and sometimes *Prætextatæ*, when the characters were Roman, from the habit of Roman noblemen. Low comedy was called *Tabernariæ*, from *taberna*, a shop or tavern.

Horace has censured Plautus for negligence in the metre of his verses; but the subject is so obscure that it is hard to understand what is meant by the charge. We shall therefore consider the man and his works without reference to the question. Plautus was born at Sarsina, now Sezza—a small town in Umbria, or Æmilia, as it was more recently denominated. The poet was called Plautus from his splay feet; his proper name was Marcius Accius. He was probably the son of a slave named Libertus. He died about 184 B.C., but the period of his birth is unknown; nor can we fix the time when his plays were acted. It is, however, on record that he was handsomely paid for his work; but he risked the proceeds in trade, and lost them. He was, in consequence, so far reduced that, in a period of general famine, he was compelled to work at a mill. While thus employed, however, he contrived to compose three plays. He wrote twenty in all; at least no more are extant, though some say he wrote six more. His humour was peculiar, and considered to be inimitable. His *Amphitryo* was once played on a solemn occasion to pacify the anger of Jupiter. The poet

composed an epitaph for himself; highly laudatory, stating that with him, wit, laughter, jest, and harmony deserted the stage. He was, indeed, by the acknowledgment of all, remarkable for his wit, if not for his elegance. Always lively and entertaining, he was admitted to have "hastened with his characters to the winding-up of his play," in which particular Horace compares him with Epicharmus, a Greek comic writer and a scholar of Pythagoras; but he charges him meanwhile with having overcharged some of his characters and neglected others. As to style, his critics tell us that his sentences have a peculiar smartness, conveying the thought with point and clearness which secures attention and pleases the fancy.

Of the plays of Plautus, the *Amphitryo* is tolerably well known to French and English readers by the imitations of Molière and Dryden. The characters are gods and princes; and as Euripides wrote a drama under the same title, it may have been partly derived from the Hellenic poet. His next play, *Asinaria* (the Ass-Driver), was certainly rendered from the Greek of Demophilus. It is supposed, also, that he was indebted to a Greek original for his *Aulularia* (the Casket), from which Molière took his *Avare*, and our own Wycherly his *Miser*.

The first comedy of Plautus represented is supposed to have been the *Cistellaria* (the Basket), acted the eighteenth year of the Punic war, the prologue of which is spoken by the god *Auxilium*. This apparent absurdity is, however, justifiable by the nature of the argument. In another play he adopted the same expedient, namely, *Rudens* (the Cable), translated from the Greek of Diphilus. The prologue is spoken by the god or the constellation *Arcturus*, whose heliacal rising and setting were reckoned tempestuous. In another play, called *Trinummus* (the Hidden Treasure), the prologue is spoken by the allegorical characters of *Luxury* and *Penury*.

Plautus has had many imitators. Ben Jonson in part copied his *Alchymist* from Plautus's *Mostellaria* (the Ghost), and Shakespeare has imitated his *Menæchmi* (the Twins), in the *Comedy of Errors*. His *Pseudolus* (the Cheat) has been variously imitated by modern writers.

The play on which Plautus most prided himself is entitled *Truculentus* (the Churl). It is, however, a translation from the Greek. His remaining productions are respectively entitled, *Captivi* (the Captives); *Curculio*, or the *Discovery*; *Epidicus* (the

Litigious); Bacchides, or the Sisters; Miles Gloriosus, (the Bragging Captain); Mercator (the Merchant), and Pænulus, the Carthaginian, with Casina, Persa, and Stichus, all three being the names of slaves, who are introduced among the characters. For the most part, Plautus has observed in these plays the technical unities of time and place.

Terence is a less original and animated but a more elegant dramatist. He was born about nine years before Plautus died. The Romans had already begun to be more learned, and Plautus was, therefore, from his birth surrounded with more favourable influences than Terence had been, and these operated accordingly on his genius. He was probably a Carthaginian of good family, who had been made captive by the Numidians, and purchased as a slave by the Romans. He fell into the hands of a generous master, Terentius Lucanus, a senator, who gave him his education and his freedom. He soon became familiar with the nobility, and was patronised by Paulus Æmilianus and his son Scipio, and adopted also by the son of the elder Scipio Africanus, a young nobleman about nine years his junior, who had distinguished himself in the wars at seventeen years of age. To him and to another of his patrons Lælius, the enemies of Plautus attributed the composition of his plays. Lælius, in fact, is known to have written some verses in the Fourth Act of *Heautontimorumenos* (the Self-Tormentor).

The *Andria* is generally stated to have been Terence's first piece, but erroneously. It was, in fact, his second, and acted in his twenty-seventh year (166 B.C.) The *Hecyra* was performed in the following year, and the above-mentioned *Self-Tormentor* two years subsequently. The *Eunuch* and the *Phormio* date two years later still, and in the next year the *Adelphi* (or *Brothers*) was acted.

Terence was now thirty-three years of age, and determined to travel into Greece. He did so, and remained there a year, during which he was engaged in collecting the plays of the celebrated Athenian poet, Menander. Of these he translated many. He then prepared to return home. But the voyage was fatal to him, and he died on the passage, being not quite thirty-five years of age.

Terence was a married man, and had a daughter, to whom he left a house and gardens on the Appian Way; so that the account that he died very poor cannot be accurate. He received, it is said, eight

thousand sesterces for his *Eunuch* the first time it was performed; and it appears that the poets used to be paid every time their plays were acted, the *Ædiles* employing the chief actor of the company to settle with the author about the price. Many of the plays of Terence were acted more than once, the *Eunuch*, for instance, twice in one day, and the *Hecyra* three times.

The commentators and critics have decided that three points of excellence belong to Terence; the beauty of his characters, the politeness of his dialogue, and the regularity of the scene. The differences between him and Plautus are antithetically expressed. Allowance, it is urged, must be made for circumstances. Terence composed his pieces at a villa of Scipio or Lælius; whereas poor Plautus was forced to make some of his at the mill. The vivacity of Plautus's wit triumphs over their hasty birth; whereas, if Terence have produced more mature and timely offspring, we may thank for it the felicity of circumstance as much as his own genius. Plautus is the more gay, Terence the more chaste; Plautus has more genius and fire, Terence more manners and solidity; Plautus excels in low comedy and ridicule, Terence in drawing just characters, and maintaining them to the last. In this fashion, we might multiply similar parallels until they filled several columns. These suffice to indicate the real distinctions between the two poets, both excellent, however various. Lessing, it may be mentioned, has devoted a whole essay to the life and genius of Plautus; and the elder Colman effected a complete translation of the works of Terence.

The most celebrated writer of tragedies among the Romans was Seneca, the philosopher, who was the preceptor of Nero, and perished by the tyrant's order, A.D. 65. Ten dramas are extant with his name, but it is supposed that he was not the author of them all, many of them being by his nephew or son. Two only need be noticed, the *Medea* and the *Œdipus*. The former subject, which is now well known through Madame Ristori's superb representation of the character, had already been finely treated by the great poet Euripides in one of the greatest of his tragedies. Seneca has bestowed upon it a weight and a magniloquence of diction, which are peculiarities of his style. In simplicity and pathos he is inferior; and here Euripides will continue to be read when Seneca is forgotten. For the theme of the latter play, the Roman poet, whether Seneca the elder or younger, was indebted to Sophocles. It

is a play founded on a mystery which perplexes all the persons of it until its revelation in the final act. The conduct of the plot in the Greek drama is admirable; the secret being kept to the end, though gradually unfolded during the progress of the play. Seneca has not been equally successful; but the style of the *Œdipus* is more natural than that of the *Medea*. Two other tragedies attributed to Seneca, the *Octavia* and the *Thebaid*, are of little merit as dramas though not wanting in beauty as poems.

The remaining six may be summarily dismissed. They have, say classical critics, many beauties, the style being generally noble, and the sentiments sublime; but they are irregular both in regard to fable and construction, and therefore but ill suited for representation. Indeed, the tragic writers of the period composed their dramas rather for the sake of rhetorical exercise than with a design to furnish pieces for actual representation in the theatre. Of these P. Pomponius Secundus is mentioned by the younger Pliny and by Quintilian with high commendation. *Æmilius Scaurus* was the author of a tragedy entitled *Atræus*; he was put to death by *Tiberius*, having been suspected of alluding to that emperor in an objectionable passage. *Caratius Maternus* is cited as a tragic poet of celebrity. Four of his tragedies are entitled *Medea*, *Thyestes*, *Cato*, and *Domitius*. He was put to death by *Domitian*, having declaimed against tyranny. Of minor poets and dramatists Rome possessed so many that an account of them would be tedious, and, we fear, uninteresting, though some of them are of remarkable merit. Thus *Pollio*, a writer of tragedies, is celebrated both by *Horace* and *Virgil* as a fine poet, as well as a good orator and a just historian.

Ultimately, the love of the Romans for spectacles and pantomimes ruined the hopes of both the tragic and comic poet. Comedy, indeed, after the time of *Terence* was still more neglected than tragedy. Both flourished, however, sufficiently to make two actors famous, *Æsopus* and *Roscius*. They were friends of *Cicero*. The former is recorded to have excelled in tragic scenes, and the latter to have gained a wonderful reputation both in comedy and tragedy. The theatres in Rome were so large that it was difficult to perform in them. Indeed, we find it hard to conceive how a speaker, having to make himself heard by forty, or even eighty, thousand persons, was able to preserve the tones and expressions of voice requisite to touch the

feelings. The Roman actor, also, was expected sometimes to play a female part, as women never appeared on the stage except as mimes or dancers. The business of a comedian at Rome was very lucrative, and both *Æsopus* and *Roscius* acquired immense wealth.

ADVENTURE OF FIVE GOLD DIGGERS.

IN the spring of 1865, I got belated by the Mission of St. Peter's in the Rocky Mountains, and there I heard a tale of suffering, which, as a contribution to the history of gold "prospecting," I may relate just as I jotted it down from the lips of one of the adventurers. Five gold diggers of Montana Territory were wintering in a log cabin at Cottonwood, Deer Lodge, but as the winter lagged along they grew tired, and thought that they would try a little "prospecting." Accordingly, on the 10th of January, *Joe Shields*, *Jerry Cross*, *Joe Wood*, *Alexander Dorrell* and *Alexander Grant*, started on their winter journey, and after prospecting *Carpenters' Bar* they crossed the Rocky Mountains to *Helena*, where they procured the services of an old French Canadian voyageur as guide, and proceeded to explore the country about the head waters of the *Mariah*, one of the tributaries of the *Missouri River*. The company were provisioned with six months' supplies, and carried with them all necessary tools and utensils. On the 19th they reached the base of the mountains, and not expecting Indians in a section of the country so remote, they turned their animals loose to graze, and after their usual repast and smoke they laid themselves round the camp fire, to enjoy that sound and refreshing sleep vouchsafed to the hardy mountaineer. On the following morning the horses were not to be found. Presuming they had strayed, the party, after breakfast, started off to find them, and after hours of fruitless search they returned from their several directions, to find their camp stripped of everything they possessed save their buffalo robes. Realising their situation, that their horses and supplies had been stolen by some wandering band of hostile Indians, they started on the morning of the 21st to retrace their steps. They were then eighty miles above the main stream of the *Mariah* among its tributaries, but weary, hungry, and stripped of horses and provisions as they were, they began their sad march through a drizzling fall of snow, back to the Big

Bend of the Mariah, where they thought they might possibly receive shelter and succour, and certainly wood to warm them. The storm became more severe and violent as the destitute men plodded on their way. On the 25th they reached the Big Bend, when they found wood and built a fire, by which they thawed their frozen limbs, and now became more fully conscious of their helpless condition. The whole party were frozen on the 23rd, but were not aware of the fact till they saw their feet mortifying before their eyes. Thoughts of home crowded on the mind of Cross, and he wept aloud. Shields observed, that they were "all in the same fix," there was no "use crying about it," that they would "all die together," and find "an end to their troubles." The whole company, with the exception of Grant, were now helpless, and it was determined that he should attempt to bring succour to them. Accordingly he, though badly frozen, after receiving directions from the old voyageur, started from the camp determined to bring assistance to the party or perish in the attempt. In four days he dragged his frozen feet over a distance of thirty-five miles, and reached an Indian trading post on the Mariah. A Mexican, accompanied by eleven Indians with horses and supplies, started from the post the following day after Grant's arrival there, to relieve the frozen and starving men.

Nine days elapsed from the time the Indians stole the horses and supplies to the time of the arrival of the rescue party, and during the interval one prairie chicken, shot by Shields with his revolver, was all the food the party had partaken of. None of them were able to walk a step, and had it not been for the unconquerable resolution and perseverance of Cross, they must have all perished. Cross would crawl upon his hands and knees and break and gather twigs, which he would tie together, and taking the string between his teeth, would drag them to the fire which kept warmth and life in his helpless companions. Though still unable to move, they gradually revived under the influence of the food brought them. Stormy weather continuing from the 25th of January to the 8th of April travel was impossible, and exposed to the severity of the weather, the party, now augmented by the Mexican and Indians, were compelled to remain in camp at the Big Bend. On the 9th of April the frozen men were placed on "trivvors," or hand sledges, and hauled to St. Peter's or the Blackfort Mission, where they were re-

ceived by the Fathers Jurday and Emenda, Italian priests, who extended to them more than hospitality and more than humanity. Some groceries, buffalo meat, and flour constituted their stock of provisions, and though they had been compelled to put themselves on an allowance of bread, they denied themselves, and gave their portion to the invalids. Cross, Woods, Dorrell, Shields, and the French guide all lost their feet. Shields sharpened his butcher's knife (always carried by travellers in a sheath at their belt) on a stone, and cut off his own feet while in camp at the Mariah; the feet of the rest of the party were amputated by the Mexican and the Indians. When I saw Grant his feet were badly frozen, but although some bones had come out, he expected in time to be able to wear boots again. His feet looked as if they had been burned, wounded, and crisped with hot iron. In a few weeks they were able again to travel, and though the good priests refused to accept any remuneration, the unfortunate adventurers—liberal as they were fearless and brave—compelled them to accept the sum of one hundred dollars from each of them, that they might be able again to succour others as they had assisted them. Three weeks after Grant left the prostrate camp, the same Indians who had robbed them massacred a party of nine white men and a negro, engaged in surveying out a town site at the mouth of the Mariah.

THE MAIDEN AND THE LEPER.

Down the green valley, on her ass,
Rideth the maiden Zanitas,
Dews are falling, song birds sing,
'Tis a Christian evening:
Lower, slower, sinks the sun,
The white stars glimmer, one by one.

Who sitteth musing at his door?
Silas the leper, gaunt and hoar;
Tho' he is curst in every limb,
Full whitely Time hath snow'd on him.
Dews are falling, song birds sing,
'Tis a Christian evening:
The Leper, drinking in the air,
Sits like a beast with idiot stare.

How pale! how wondrous! she doth pass,
The heavenly maiden Zanitas!
She looks—she seeth—she shuddereth,
She passeth on with bated breath.
Dews are falling, song birds sing,
'Tis a Christian evening:
His mind is like a stagnant pool,
She passeth o'er it, beautiful!

Brighter, whiter, in the skies
Open innumerable eyes;
The Leper looketh up and sees,
His bitter heart is soothed by these.
Dews are falling, song birds sing,
'Tis a Christian evening:
He looketh up with heart astir,
And every star hath eyes like her.

Onward on her milk-white ass
 Rideth the maiden Zanitas,
 The boughs are sweet, the grass is pearl'd,
 But 'tis a miserable world.
 Dewa are falling, song birds sing,
 'Tis a Christian evening:
 All over heaven her eyes can see
 The glittering spots of Leprosy!

GIDEON BROWN.

A TRUE STORY OF THE COVENANT.

IN TWO CHAPTERS. CHAPTER II.

THREE months after the battle of Bothwell Brigg, when I was in my warehouse sorting a shipment of tobacco that I had received from Virginia, a detachment of Claverhouse's dragoons, consisting of six men, stationed themselves at my door. The captain in command entered, and with many brutal words and oaths, arrested me for having been at the battle, and called my wife an ill name, when, rushing in between us, she implored with piteous shrieks and heart-rending entreaties that I should not be taken from her. I was prepared for this arrest; and had taken great and, as I thought, sure, precautions to prove my innocence. I was led off to prison, but as I was a magistrate of Glasgow, it was thought well not to treat me with too much harshness. I lay in prison for five days, when in consequence of representations made by the Provost, and many magistrates and citizens of repute, one of whom, Mr. Wedderburn, was a strong prelatist, who all deposed that I was in Glasgow, attending quietly to my affairs on the day of the battle, and that I had not left the city for a week before or after, I was allowed to return to my family. All this time—though his enemies and mine neither knew nor suspected it—Mr. Cargill lay concealed in my house. He went forth shortly afterwards, I knew not whither, though I learned in about two months by a letter in his own hand, that he had retired into England, where he was not known, until the violence of the search after him should abate. A reward of five thousand marks was offered for him, dead or alive; and many greedy malignants were on his track. He soon returned to Scotland; and both he and the venerated Mr. Richard Cameron preached on the same Sabbath to the people at Dermeid Moor. Mr. Cameron, when preaching at Aird Moss, not long after this, was surprised by the dragoons of Claverhouse, for there was a reward of five thousand marks for his head also—and in the conflict Mr. Cameron was slain. His head and hands were cut off

and sent to Edinburgh. Mr. Cargill, nothing daunted by the fate of his brother in the Lord, continued to preach wherever he could safely gather the people together, either on the Sabbath or any other day. On the second Sabbath of September, 1688, he preached to a large congregation in the Torwood, between Falkirk and Stirling. Of this congregation I was one. It was the last time that I was permitted to look upon the face or listen to the words of that apostle of the truth. He never preached better during the whole course of his ministry, and ended by pronouncing sentence of excommunication against the king and his brother, the Duke of York, the base begotten Monmouth, and the persecuting Scottish malignants, Lauderdale, Rothes, Claverhouse, Dalzell, and others. He had a presentiment at this time that he and I would never meet again, and he took leave of me with the tears in his eyes, and a fatherly kiss upon my cheek. His presentiment was a prophecy. After eight months of peril and of hairbreadth escapes he was captured by one Irving of Bonshaw, who tied him tight with cords to the back of a horse, and otherwise despitefully used him, and conveyed him first to Lanark and thence to Glasgow, where he remained one night in the Tolbooth. He was soon thereafter tried for high treason, for having fought at Bothwell Brigg, and for having absolved the people from their allegiance to Charles Stuart on the ever-memorable Sabbath in Torwood. He was tried on the 15th of July, and the judge, the malignant Duke of Rothes, himself an aged man, but no respecter of grey hairs, spoke wrathfully and cruelly to the venerable saint, and threatened him with torture, saying that if he were rolled down-hill in a barrel set with sharp spikes of iron, or fastened to the stake with red-hot chains, such a death would be too good for him. But Mr. Cargill very quietly said, as I was afterwards told by one who was present: "I am in your power, my Lord of Rothes, but you need not threaten me. And die what death I may, *your eyes will not live to see it.*" This was thought by many to be a foolish speech. But it came to pass. Mr. Cargill was ordered for execution, and was hanged and afterwards beheaded, at the Nether Bow, Edinburgh, in the afternoon of the 26th of July. In the morning of that same day died the Duke of Rothes. Great are the judgments of the Lord, who yet speaketh by the mouths of His martyrs!

And now the day of my own tribulation

drew near. I had diligently trained up my younger brother, Andrew, to take my place as the head of the family, and to watch over the comfort of my mother, my sisters, and my wife and children, in case the persecuting hand of the foes of the Covenant should be laid heavily upon me. I had so arranged all my affairs that the loss of my liberty, and even of my life, would not reduce the household of my father into poverty, or send the seed of the righteous into the world to beg their bread. And it was well I made these arrangements in time; for my foes were many. They could not prove that I was at Bothwell Brigg; but it was known that I had been a frequent worshipper in the hills when Mr. Cargill preached. It was suspected that I had harboured him when Claverhouse was in pursuit of him; likewise, that I had been present at the memorable preaching in the Torwood. At the beginning of the year 1682 I was arrested on these last two charges, and taken to Edinburgh for trial. I was found guilty, as I foresaw, but was told that my life would be spared, and that I should be transported to the Plantations of America. Lest I and my companions should find our way to New England, whither many friends of the Covenant and the freedom of conscience had banished themselves that they might worship God in their own way; and lest we should there find the comfort and companionship of fellow Christians; we were consigned, as if we had been merchandise, to Virginia—a plantation almost as full of malignants as London, or the court of King Charles. Seventy-three of us were shipped on board a small vessel in the Leith Roads. We set sail the next day for the Thames. The weather was very stormy, and the winds were adverse; after beating wofully about for eleven days, our captain took refuge at Berwick-on-Tweed. It was six weeks before we anchored off Gravesend, where I received letters from my family and my dear wife, who had resolved to follow me with her two youngest bairns to the plantation, or wherever else my evil fortune might lead me. To this I would not consent, and it was well for me that I would not. The English merchant to whom we were consigned, and who was to have the benefit of our labour and services in Virginia, had despatched his vessel to America a fortnight before our arrival. After some hesitation he refused to take charge of and feed us, and said that until the return voyage of his ship he would allow us to go free. Strange to say, he did this without conference with the

government, or the exaction of any promise from us to return into captivity when he should be ready for us.

Under these unexpected circumstances, I determined to return to Glasgow. I was well acquainted with a worthy man from Newhaven, near Edinburgh, who was master and part owner of a trading smack plying between London and Leith. I determined to make my case known to him, and solicit a passage in his vessel. I found him at home at his lodgings in Wapping, and he readily agreed to convey me to Leith. All his crew were Scotsmen, and enemies of prelacy, and abhorred the persecution that the Scottish people had so long suffered for the faith. This good man's name was Anderson; and in his little smack I sailed for Leith seven days after my arrival at Gravesend. What became of my seventy-two companions I did not know at the time, but I afterwards met several of them in Scotland. The voyage was favourable, and only occupied us ten days. On the twelfth day, at evening, I stood at my own door in the Candleriggs of Glasgow. My dear mother and my wife wept with joy to see me. The two younger bairns sat upon my knee and prattled merrily, not knowing what had been wrong with me, while the elder boy plied me with many questions, scarcely comprehending the wickedness of those who had torn me away from them, and promising that when old enough, he too would be a soldier of the Covenant. The prayers we all put up to God that evening ascended from grateful as well as contrite hearts, though all of us, save the children, were aware that I might again be snatched from them on my former sentence, and a worse penalty than banishment inflicted. Happily these fears proved groundless; and greatly to my surprise and joy I remained in Glasgow, publicly attending to my affairs without being molested. There was a lull in the persecution, for what cause I know not, unless it were that the English people were becoming as discontented as the Scotch, because an avowed papist like the Duke of York was heir to the throne, and because that if he succeeded to it Protestantism itself would be in danger. For me, I resolved to walk warily, and avoid occasion of offence, though I could not conform to prelacy, even to save my life, or cease attendance at the ministrations of such true servants of Jesus as Mr. Cargill had been, and as the other brave and good men were, who since his martyrdom had been raised up to supply his place.

Everything went very quietly with me for three years, and I sometimes fancied that I had been forgotten by my foes. But their anger was not dead, and broke out very heavily against me and many thousands more in the early summer of 1684. The English government had heard rumours of a conspiracy to excite an insurrection in the country, to raise an army of the Covenant in Scotland under the Earl of Argyll, who was then in Holland. If victory rewarded the movement, the plan was to dethrone the king, and exclude the papist Duke of York from the succession. Charles Stuart and his brother, and all the malignants who supported them, believed that these things would be attempted, and in their fright and fury resolved to make short work of their enemies in Scotland. None was too high and none was too low for their vengeance. Suspicion of enmity to the king's government, unsupported by the slightest proof, brought many an innocent head to the scaffold. Russell and Sydney died upon the block in London; and for some short while before their execution, and for a whole year afterwards, it appeared that the realm of Britain had been handed over to the dominion of devils. After the martyrdom of Donald Cargill and Richard Cameron, I, with many more friends of the cause, had given what aid was in our power towards the sustenance of other preachers, as brave and zealous as they, and I had notably taken to my heart a young man, James Renwick, a true servant of the Lord Jesus. I attended his ministrations with edification. The three years of quiet which I had enjoyed since my escape from Gravesend had doubtless emboldened me to walk less cautiously than I should have done, although I ought to have been warned by the events in England, as well as at home, to take heed of my doings. But to remain calm and contented under oppression is not in my nature, and never was. I ought not to have been a trader, but a preacher and a fighter; yet though a trader, and bound to remain so, in obedience to the will of my father, and to provide for the wants of those he had left under my charge, I could help the cause by my worldly substance in the quiet days, and, if need were, by the sword in my strong right hand in the days of danger.

On the 29th of July, after a frugal supper with my family, and after I had read, as was my custom, a chapter from the Word of God, and pronounced a benediction on my little flock, I went quietly to my bed,

unsuspicious of evil. At one hour after midnight, a party of soldiers broke violently into my house, and rushed up to my sleeping chamber. The officer in command presented a pistol at my head, threatening to shoot me dead if I offered the least resistance, and ordered me to follow. Without allowing me to say farewell to my children, and brutally pushing away my wife, who clung despairingly to me, they marched me through the streets, to the Tolbooth of Glasgow. I was informed that the charge against me was that I was present at the brae side in Kelvin Grove, on the previous Sabbath, when Mr. Renwick preached. Though I had often attended the godly ministrations of Mr. Renwick, it so happened that on that particular Sabbath I had been in Campsie Glen to hear Mr. Peden preach. I did not tell the persecutors where I had been, lest they should have been incited thereby to search for Mr. Peden; but simply denied that I had been in Kelvin on the day named. After I had lain three weeks in prison along with thieves and malefactors, I and many other citizens of Glasgow, fellow-sufferers with me in this cause, were offered our liberty, if we would take the oath of allegiance and renounce the Covenant. This I refused to do, as did seven others. On the following morning we eight were marched to Edinburgh, chained together two and two, preceded and followed by a troop of soldiers, who often struck us over our shoulders, and even on our heads, with the flat of their sabres, to compel us to walk faster than our strength enabled us. We were two days and a half upon the road, and, on our arrival at Edinburgh, were thrust into the Tolbooth. We slept upon the damp floor, and were fed with mouldy bread, having no water to drink, but such as was putrid. In this miserable state I and my companions in suffering remained for eleven weeks. At length, on a cold and dark day of November, I was brought alone before the council, and arraigned for having been concerned with Sir James Maxwell of Pollock, and other gentlemen, in fixing the "Apologetic Declaration" on the door of the Barony church of Glasgow. The truth in this case was that I was not acquainted with Sir James Maxwell; had never spoken to, or acted with him; and that alone and unaided, and without concert with any one, I had myself affixed the paper on the door of the church, and had on the following day the great satisfaction of seeing crowds of people gathered around to read it. I was not obliged to confess what I had done,

so I contented myself with denying all knowledge of Sir James Maxwell and of the other gentlemen. The council, however, held that the charge was proven; one member thereof taking it upon himself to say that, even if it were not proven, I was a false traitor, and ought to be hanged, drawn, and quartered. I was told to prepare myself for execution, to be first hanged, and afterwards beheaded, at ten of the clock on the morning of the next day, the twelfth of November.

I made no reply to the sentence, and was taken back to the Tolbooth, where I earnestly endeavoured to prepare myself for death. All the events of my past life passed before my mind, and with a firm reliance on my Redeemer, I looked Death steadily in the face, and feared him not. I loved my life as much as most men do, especially those who have such tender ties to link them to it as I had and have, yet I can truly say that even in those bitter moments preceding that which I believed was to be my last I was not afraid. When I heard the hour of ten boom from the Tron church I was ready for my fate. But no one came to summon me forth to die, and, much to my distress and amazement, not perhaps altogether unmingled with hope, I remained until evening in ignorance of the fact that my execution had been postponed for a week. The week passed over, drearily and wearily, and again the execution of my sentence was deferred. I sometimes thought that my persecutors desired to make me taste the bitterness of death, not once only, but many times; and that their seeming mercy was but malice and cruelty. During many miserable months I fully expected that every hour would be my last, though when, even through my prison walls, there came, in February, 1685, the tidings that the treacherous Charles Stuart had gone to his account, and been succeeded by his papist brother, the Duke of York, I began to entertain an idea that my life would be spared. It appeared to me that the new king would not commence his reign by bloodshed, and that I and other prisoners condemned to death would be set free. But these hopes were vain, and no word of relief or rescue came to my prison door.

Calamities worse even than death were in store for me and my fellow-prisoners. Tidings arrived in Edinburgh of the rising of the Duke of Monmouth in England, and of the landing in the West of Scotland of the Earl of Argyll. It was early in May when this champion of the Covenant appeared on

the shores of Lorn and Kantyre, and there being fears that he might be well supported by the people, and advance upon Edinburgh, all the prisoners of the Covenant, to the number of nearly two hundred and fifty, of whom I was one, were marched in the dead of night, handcuffed two by two, and escorted by cavalry as far as Leith, where we were all put on board of a vessel waiting to receive us, and were landed at Burntisland, in Fife. On arrival, we were all crowded into a prison consisting of two small rooms of about twenty feet square, or less, where we remained three days, suffering intolerable agonies for want of air and water, and for want of space to lie down and die in, which many of us would have been glad to do. Many of the unhappy company were suffocated, and died standing; being removed by the guards on duty, they left a little additional room for the wretched survivors. On the fourth day, all who remained of us—and it seemed, though I could never exactly tell, that our numbers were diminished by about seventy souls—were shipped from Burntisland, still chained two by two, to the Castle of Dunottar, on the wild sea coast of Kincardineshire. In this gloomy prison, that had many vaults and dungeons, we were divided into smaller gangs or companies, so that whatever death we might die, we should not die for want of space and air. I and twenty-four others were confined in the great vault, that had a high grated window overlooking the sea. We were told on entering, by the officer in command, a savage and hairy Highlander, named M'Dougall, who could speak but little English, that we were all under sentence of death, and might be executed any morning, without further notification than a word from him. I had within the last few months heard the like threat so often, that I had ceased to look upon death as a foe to be feared.

We had lain in this place about a fortnight, when I suggested to my companions a plan of escape. Having often been hoisted on the shoulders of Allan Leslie, the strongest and tallest man among us, to the one grated window of the dungeon, to breathe the fresh air, I discovered about ten feet underneath it, a narrow ledge of the rock on which the castle was built; and I made up my mind that if we could reach this ledge we might, by careful walking and climbing, both up and down, reach the sea shore. I communicated my idea to the rest, and it was agreed to twist such parts of our clothing—we had no bedding—as we could

spare, into a rope strong enough to bear the weight of a man, and long enough to let him down from the window to the ledge of rock. It took us three days to make our preparations, and by the aid of Mr. Leslie we managed to break the bars of the window, and to be let down one after the other to the rock. Mr. Leslie himself was the last to descend. We began our work soon after midnight, but the sun had risen, and was an hour high on the horizon ere we completed it. Some lasses from the neighbouring village having come to wash their clothes within sight of the rock gave the alarm to the sentinels, and fifteen out of our twenty-five were captured, just as freedom seemed within our reach. The other ten, of whom Mr. Leslie was one, managed to escape. I was one of the fifteen unfortunates brought back to prison. The Highland captain was furious against us. It seemed as if nothing could satisfy him so much as our torture. One after the other we were stripped naked, without other covering than a cloth around our loins, and in that condition were strapped upon our backs to a board, so that we could stir neither hand nor foot. Then with a diabolical cruelty, burning matches were applied between each of our fingers of both hands, and between the toes of our feet, and were left to burn themselves out. One poor sickly creature, named Dalglish, died under this torture; several lost the use of their hands or feet. I, more fortunate than the others, only suffered from some severe flesh wounds, which speedily healed. We were then put into a darker vault in the interior, and were threatened with death on the following Monday.

The Monday came, but not the death, though to live as we all lived was to die daily. In the first week of August, Captain M'Dougall announced to us, in bad English, that he was sorry to say the merciful government had spared our worthless lives, and banished us to the plantations, on condition that we should never again return to Scotland. About the eleventh or twelfth of August we were shipped to Leith to the number of one hundred and fourteen, where, lying in our ship opposite Musselburgh, twenty-eight of us addressed a letter to our friends, wherein we declared that we left our native land by an unjust sentence, for no other offence than the performance of our duty, the studying how to hold by the Covenant and our baptismal vows, whereby we stood obliged to resist and testify against all that was con-

trary to God's Word. We furthermore declared that our sentence, first of death, and afterwards of banishment, was pronounced against us because we would not take the oath of allegiance to the king as lord spiritual as well as temporal, which in conscience we could not take, because, if we had done so, we should have denied that the Lord Jesus was supreme or had any power in his own church. I do not know whether this protest was promulgated among our friends, or published for the encouragement of the long-suffering people of Scotland, but it relieved our souls to sign it.

We lay in Leith Roads, waiting for a fair wind, thirteen days. After this, the weather being favourable, we sailed for North America. On the seventh day, when near the Land's End, a malignant fever broke out in our ship, which pressed very heavily on the weakest of the brethren who had suffered from the close confinement of Burntisland, and afterwards of the doleful Castle of Dunottar. Our captain was a coarse and brutal man, who behaved to us with great harshness. Even the fever which broke out among us did not seem to soften his temper, and he declared, with horrid imprecations, that he commanded a doomed ship in having such canting hypocrites, and damnable rebels, and round-heads, aboard, as we were. In one day seven of the poor people died. The next day there died five; the third day there died nine; and as their bodies were thrown into the sea, one after another, I think there were few amongst us who did not envy the dead. But I was not of these. I clung to my life, and prayed to the Lord that I might yet be spared to testify in the flesh to the truth of His Word. In one hundred and ten days thereafter, suffering much all the time, and especially at the last, for want of food and water, and beating about in contrary winds, we caught sight of North American land and the heights of Neversink; with a fair breeze, we passed the Narrows, and sailed into the Bay of New York, greatly rejoiced, every one of us, not excepting our captain, at once again seeing the dry land.

It was in the midst of the winter, on the 23rd of December, 1685, that we landed at Hoboken, a village on the southern bank of the Hudson river, opposite the city of New York. We were unexpectedly told on landing that we were free, and might go where we listed, and do what seemed good to us, except that if we returned to England or Scotland we would render ourselves

liable to be hanged, on the sentence already pronounced against us. The people of the place came out to meet us, and, taking pity on our unfortunate condition, plied us with many questions, asking of us who we were, whence we came, and what we could do to help ourselves in the new land. It happened, in God's providence, that one of the inhabitants, who kept a store for the sale of grocery and provisions, was a Glasgow man, who knew me by sight, having known my father before me, and had voluntarily emigrated fifteen years before. He took me to his house, and treated me kindly, and like a brother, and asked me to tell him all my story, the which I told him. The name of this good man was Patrick Henderson. In his house, and tended affectionately by his wife, a comely Scottish woman from Paisley, I lay nine weeks in a sickness that every one thought would be mortal. But I had a strong body, and a heart that not even a mortal sickness could depress, and, thanks to my inner hope and strength, and to the care of worthy Mrs. Henderson, I began to revive with the early spring. By the month of May, when the buds had bursted into leaves, and the flowers were glinting through the warm covering of the last year's leaves, I was not only able to walk abroad, and enjoy the invigorating sunshine, but to do a fair day's work at felling the forest trees for a clearing in a little farm of Mr. Henderson's, which he had laid out near Newark. Many of the companions of my voyage, and previous sufferings in Dunottar, relinquishing all hope of revisiting their native country, and finding themselves in a land where every man was free to worship God according to his conscience, resolved to stay in the New World. About thirty proceeded to Massachusetts Bay, and as many more to Connecticut and to Rhode Island, and other colonies founded by the saints who sailed from England in the May Flower. I, too, had some thoughts of making America my future home, and wrote to my brother in Glasgow to wind up all my affairs in Scotland, and send over to me my wife and family, with such money as might be due to me, on an equal partition of the business between him and me, after proper provision for my beloved mother. It appeared afterwards that he did not act on my instructions, because of events which were in progress in England, known to him at the time, and not to me; for about eight months after I had written to him I received a reply, in

which he bade me be of good cheer, for that King James had alienated and disgusted all parties in Great Britain, and would, in all human likelihood, either share the fate of his father, Charles the First, or be driven from the throne; in either of which happy events it would be both wise and safe for me to return to Scotland. He even thought it would be advisable for me not to wait for events, but to return at the first convenient opportunity. The spirit of the Scottish people, he said, as well as that of the English, was thoroughly aroused, and he was confident that the end of the persecution was drawing near.

Boston, Massachusetts, April 27th, 1689.

It is nigh upon two years since I wrote the last words in the foregoing history of my life. These words form a prediction that has been verified. During the last year I have resided in the near neighbourhood of this city, occupying myself with such affairs as have fallen in my way; cultivating a little farm and garden on the Charles River; and making the acquaintance of many good men and true servants of Christ. It seemed to me at times that even here there was to be no real peace for the people of the Covenant, and that the hands of the papist James Stuart could reach across the ocean. The governor of New England, one Sir Edmund Andros, sent over from England in a royal frigate, soon after the death of Charles the Second, with full powers to enforce various acts that were obnoxious to the colonists, and to remove and appoint members of the council at his pleasure without reference to the will of the people, made both himself and the British government odious throughout New England, and created a discontent as great as had ever existed even in Scotland. But four weeks ago good tidings, and very unexpected, arrived in Boston. It was announced that the Protestant Prince of Orange had landed at Torbay; that James the Second had fled; and that William the Third and his consort Mary had been recognised by parliament and people as sovereigns of England. The messenger that brought these tidings from New York to Sir Edmund Andros was thrust into prison without being allowed to say a word in his defence, for bearing false news, or, as the governor profanely called it, for telling "a damned lie." Further tidings arrived from New York in a few days, and on the eighteenth, Governor Andros, seeing the gathering wrath of the people, fled to the fort for safety. A boat that came from a royal frigate in the

harbour to convey him on board was taken possession of by the militia of Boston, and the guns of the battery being turned against the fort, Andros surrendered at discretion, and was forthwith committed to the same prison whither fourteen days before he had sent the messenger. The aged Simon Bradstreet, a trusty servant of the Lord, was proclaimed governor by the people, and all New England was alive with praises to God, and heartfelt rejoicing that the people of the colonies and plantations, as well as those of Great Britain, had been freed from the yoke of Popery, and were, under a new king, to enter into the full enjoyment of the civil and religious liberty of which they had long been deprived. To me these days were days of ample recompense for all my past sufferings, and I forthwith determined to return to my own people, and pass the remainder of my days in Scotland.

Glasgow, April 27th, 1690.

It is exactly a year this day since I added a short chapter to my history. I take up the pen to complete the record, that my children, and all who come after me, may learn from my own hand the story of my happy return to my home and family. On arrival in London from Boston, in July last, after a voyage in which our ship was many times in great peril from icebergs, far more terrible than storms, I learned to my infinite satisfaction that the Revolution of 1688 had ended in the happy though not unquestioned establishment of the throne of William the Third, whom may God long preserve for the government of these realms! Also, that all the wicked laws of Charles and James Stuart, levelled against Presbytery and the Christian people of Scotland, had been repealed. I learned at the same time, to my exceeding sorrow, that my sainted friend, Mr. Renwick, had fallen into the hands of the Philistines, had been tried before the High Court of Justiciary in Edinburgh on an indictment charging him with denying the king's authority in the Church of Christ, refusing to pay the cess, and maintaining the lawfulness of defensive war against civil and religious oppression. It did not surprise me to learn that he was found guilty, and, when found guilty, that the malignants rejoiced at the infliction of his doom. But he was the last of the martyrs, and one of the bravest and best. He sealed his faith with his blood, in the twenty-sixth year of his age, and left no successor to fight his good fight, inasmuch as the fight was ended, and a truce, if not a peace, was allowed to

Scotland and the upholders of the Covenant. On reaching Glasgow, I learned with much grief, but no surprise, that my venerated mother had been gathered to the blessed company of the just in heaven, and that almost her last words were a prayer for me, her banished son. I also learned—and the blow was indeed very hard to bear—that the Lord had taken to himself the youngling of my little flock, my wee daughter Jeanie, who died when I was at sea, coming home with the yearning hope to press her to my bosom. All else was well with me—in mind, in body, in family, and in estate. For all which blessings, with a humble, a contrite, and a grateful heart, I here, in closing my narrative, return thanks unto the Lord God of my salvation.

THE BRIDGE OF SIGHS.

A YACHTING STORY.

BOOK II.

CHAPTER VII. BREAKING DOWN.

CONWAY wrote every day full of hopes and anxieties; but everything seemed to be going well on the whole. These letters gradually grew warmer and more hopeful.

Dearest, I know now that I am quite certain; and when I return to you next week I shall be M.P. for St. Arthur's-on-the-Sea. *Then* what a world before us! You write to me not to be anxious about certain matters, but trust to you. Trust to you, dearest! Why there is a melody for me in these words. You little know the confidence I have in you. It was one of the charms that drew me to you. Your very look has been enough for me, and a mere motion, a glance of your eye, I accepted as an assurance. Indeed, your whole life for me has been such—always true—though there has been a little foolish cloud between us of late. Dudley I see little of, and he is of no use to me.

There was something in this letter that gave her a hope and peace she had not had for long ages. He had never paid her so candid or so just a tribute before, and it made her face glow all over. It seemed to dispel the noxious vapours which had been rising about her. Her spirits began to rise.

The next day passed without a letter from him; the nomination was to be on the following morning. It was now known that the other candidate had but a poor chance. In the afternoon she went almost treading on air, she was so happy, when she met an elderly friend.

"So glad to meet you," he said. "You can tell me the meaning of all this."

"Of what?" she said.

"About your husband. What on earth made him do that? It seems incomprehensible; with the ball at his foot——"

"I know nothing," she said, excitedly. "What can you mean?"

"Oh, then you have not heard." And he pulled the evening paper out of his pocket. He held this paragraph before her eyes. A film seemed to come over them as they read:

"ST. ARTHUR'S, NOON.—Mr. Conway, one of the candidates, has withdrawn. No reasons assigned for this unexpected step. The other candidate walks over."

She hardly knew how she got home; but now, indeed, the old shadow seemed to be cast before her for all time—a dreadful presage of evil. She waited for his coming as it grew dark. At the hour she had guessed he entered, and hurriedly embraced her, all as usual.

"Well," he said. "There, I am out of all that. The bubble is burst for ever!"

She was quite calm. "But why? What does it all mean?"

"It looks like a mystery, a madness, does it not? and so it is. To-morrow I might have been member—my life and hope; a few months later have held office; later on—but that is all finished, and for ever."

"But why—why? Ah, tell me, I implore you."

"There is good reason for it, at least in my mind, whom it most concerns. As a favour I ask you not to press or worry me about this act. I could not tell you; to make such a terrible sacrifice I must have had a terrible necessity of some kind. I am fretted and disappointed, and it will add to my trouble if I have to face any importunity. There was a real and substantial reason. Can I depend upon you for this?"

Gazing at him like one just stunned with a blow, she said "Yes."

"Then now adieu to that dream of folly which I wrote to you of. That romantic life, the one in which I had such hopes, is done with for ever. Oh!" and he covered up his face, "what a fall! What a wretched miserable fall! Ah, Jessica, that St. Arthur's was an ill-omened place for us all."

Thus ended that episode of his life. He did not come back to the subject, nor did her old pride venture to approach it. For the public it was a nine days' wonder. His money had fallen short; he had "broken down;" there was a very awkward business

which wanted clearing up. But between him and Jessica there seemed to be a widening gap. He was the same to her, and yet she felt there was a fatal alteration. Do what she would, arm herself in what way she would, she could not shut out the dim idea that this strange sacrifice was in some way connected with her. Yet not a word or a look of his pointed to this, beyond a gaze of hopeless disappointment, a miserable dejection, as he sat with his eyes fixed on her. As he would not trust her, she disdained to ask his confidence; and she was wretched, worse: she felt that this was but the beginning of a wretchedness that was to last all their lives.

He had a restless and feverish eagerness, as she noted, about Dudley, always writing to him, waiting for letters from him. At last she saw him receive one with a foreign postmark, in Dudley's writing, and which made him start. "Gone to India. Was there ever such treatment?" he muttered. "Oh, it is cruel to leave me in this way!"

Another letter came that seemed to promise an early return, and he grew calm again. His wife's quick sense noted also a certain discomfort, lasting only for a second, in his manner, when she first entered the room; and the same eager sense noted also a sort of devotion to her that seemed forced, and almost acted, that fretted her and drove her almost to madness.

He was getting ill. His heavy sacrifice preyed on his mind, and within the week he was lying in a nervous fever, with a squadron of doctors about him. These gentry gave him over, with, of course, a saving clause, "unless some extraordinary turn took place."

Jessica watched and waited on him with a sort of frantic devotion that took pride in every sacrifice and suffering. For her there was no rest; for her no sleep. When the doctors passed their sentence—for as such the patient's friends look on it—that he was not to live unless he *did* live, she received it with an icy insensibility. Her thoughts that night went back to her own life, which might as well, it seemed to her, end with this—that weary penitential course which, with the exception of a few weeks of happiness, had been the pattern of her existence. She was weary. He had been dead to her many weeks now; morally, his heart had been turned from her; the rest would make little difference, save to him.

It was getting towards midnight, and her eyes were on the ground reading all these things fiercely in the very pattern of

the carpet, when she was roused by his voice calling to her gently. His senses had come back. She flew to his side. He asked the conventional questions, "Had he been long ill?—had he been very bad?—what had been his illness?" Then with some hesitation, "Had he lost his senses?—had he raved or talked?"

"No, dearest, no; not a sentence."

"Not a word, Jessica?"

"Not a word."

"I am glad. I am satisfied. And the doctors—do they give me over? Come. You know me well, Jessica. Disguise to me would only have the effect of telling the naked truth to a weak mind."

She knew this, and she told him.

"I hope so—I trust so," he said, with a sigh. "If my old ill luck does not come in the way to force me to live on and bear my burden."

She dropped on her knees beside him. "But why burden?" she said; "oh, let us be happy again! Lay it down now, and be well once more. Tell me here, at this moment, what it is. Have I to do with it? Tell me."

"It is no use now," he said. "The judges have sentenced me, and I shall be out of the way. You will be free then. You have seen some change in me? Well, let us put that down to the same cause."

"What! and leave me," said Jessica, passionately, "without this explained, as though I had done some crime—some injury to you. Not a word; not a look even. Oh, how cruel and unjust!"

He grew excited. "I can tell nothing now, for I know nothing. Later, if I live.—Ask your conscience then. I mean," he added, hurriedly, "there is no use now in dealing with it. If I have been wrong or mistaken I cannot cure it now. But I have not been. What are all these letters? Read them out for me, and put me in communion with the world again!"

Fearful of exciting him she did so. They were a motley collection. One was from her father. There was an archdeaconry really about to be vacant. "Surely something could be done now. Strange that with this much-talked-of interest some trifling exertion could not be made. He must really ask Conway to try and put his shoulder to the wheel." With more in this strain he passed on to St. Arthur's. "This place is going to the dogs. I am sick of it. They are wretched creatures—not fit for gentlemen to be with. And but for the season time I should not be an hour here. I suppose you have heard about the man

Dudley. He went off on some mad outlandish excursion in India, and was torn in pieces by a tiger. A most rude, ill-conditioned fellow."

"Dudley dead!" said the patient, starting up. "What! gone and left me in this way. Nothing certain—nothing known; and I may die without anything known or anything certain. Oh, Jessica, Jessica!" he added, turning on her. "What are you? What have you been?"

"Then you do suspect something of me? And I knew this man was my enemy. Tell me all now. I am entitled to it."

He paused. "Yes. I must be just, and at such a time as this, I ought to tell you; and as Dudley is gone, who was to bring all home—"

"To me?"

"Yes, Jessica, you deceived me. You were with that girl at her death; you alone, and no one else! Deny it if you dare."

She saw it all now. "I do not deny it," she faltered.

"No, you could not. You heard me again and again speculate over that poor victim's last moments, wonder how strange and mysterious it all was. Yet you never spoke. Never."

"I own it. But—"

"You cannot deny it. It came up again and again. Dudley had his suspicions, and named them. You still said nothing. He raised mine. You still said nothing. Jessica, there was a reason for that silence!"

"There was," she went on, hurriedly, "and if you would only listen—"

"Never. I have done more than I meant in telling you so much. I tell you this solemnly, Jessica: no explanation, however ingenious, could clear it up for me now. I shall die believing what I believe—"

"O God!" she started back. "You do not suppose that— Oh, that would be too horrible!"

"Yes. You were with her, and were seen with her. Your quarrel, your angry voice, and your threats, were heard. There were two witnesses. Dudley one—"

"To what—to what?" she repeated. "Oh, does any one say I had to do with her death? Oh, not you. In Heaven's name there is no thought of that in your mind?"

He was silent.

"Speak, or this will kill me."

"What can you deny of all this; the quarrel, or the threats? But denial could do nothing."

"I deny nothing. I own it all, and yet you have such poor faith in me, you can believe these horrors? Is it not your disgrace rather than mine, that you have no confidence?"

"It is because you deceived me," he said, fiercely, "and organised a deceit. Were I sworn solemnly before Heaven to give a verdict, what could I do, were I conscientious? Dudley is dead. Were he living, indeed——"

"Enough," she said, calmly. "After this never word more shall pass my lips. But be just to the living. There was another witness of this—crime."

"Dudley went to India to search for him. His death was unfortunate for us. Think not that there is any idea abroad of this. This spectre has risen between you and me alone. There is no idea of violence, or of a blow, as that brutal Dudley would have it. There was the refined and more deadly vengeance of delay, of making the removal of that fatal bridge an instrument by which to kill her. Oh, it was cruel to let her lie there, her poor heart's blood welling out while you took the long round to fetch help."

She was so aghast at this minute, fearful, and specious charge, she could not say a word. It seemed to quite crush her. She saw that denial was hopeless; that with one of his sensitive mind defence was idle.

"I wished to forget the whole thing," he said, after a pause, "to leave it behind for ever. I was prepared even to own that I had been a little harsh in judging—though warranted, after the ordinary rules of evidence, by the facts."

"But what facts? I demand on this spot to know them fully and fairly."

"You know them already. You disdained to refute them."

"Because you should have disdained to receive them."

"Can you answer me this one question? Did you not hear her call out for the boat?"

She thought a moment. "Yes, I remember it now. I did hear her."

He started and stood up. "You did! Then that man was right in all! And do you admit this *also*," he went on, with a look almost of alarm, "that you said aloud as you saw her lying there, 'There is retribution—all through your own act'?"

Again Jessica thought a moment, and aghast at these revelations, answered, "Yes, now I recal it."

"Then it is true; and you let that girl lie there to die, to carry out the idea of her being punished through her own act—you that knew there was a boat there. Ah!

Jessica, I know your nature well. Not all the reasoning in the world could explain that away."

"Nor shall I explain it ever," she said with bitterness and pride. "Not one word shall pass my lips after this night. Not if I were to lose your good opinion for ever—and yourself for ever. I see what is passing in your mind, and it is unworthy of you and of me."

"It is not my work," he said coldly. "It was unworthy of you to conceal your share in that business."

"Once more," she asked, "and for the last time, do you acquit me?"

"Why did you conceal it from me?—explain that first."

"Never!"

"Be it so, then."

After that it was as though a high barrier had been raised up between husband and wife. The old affection seemed to have gone out for ever, and instead there came a resentful defiance on one side, and on the other a sort of shrinking terror. Yet he speedily recovered; got back fast to good health and strength; but he had a sort of morbid repulsion to her, as she well saw. Every day, every hour she had to drag this lengthening chain, until life grew all but insupportable. At last she found she could endure it no longer, and one morning came to him to say she wished to go on a visit to a friend. She noticed a curious excitement in his manner.

"It will relieve you of the presence of one whom you think to be at least a moral murderess."

"Then you say," he replied eagerly, "you are *not*! Say so, Jessica, explicitly, in solemn terms, and I will go down on my knees and ask your pardon."

"It is enough that your own heart should say it for me. It is idle asking me—and an insult."

"Oh! there is the subterfuge again. How can I ask my heart anything, when it answers—when facts answer?"

"Enough," she said; "let it be as it is. I will take an oath, but not the one you ask me to take. As I stand here I swear, that after this, not a word shall ever be uttered to clear myself. If you wish me to be as I was you must clear me."

He shook his head. "I can do nothing. And nothing else can help you. See, here is news. You are going on this visit?"

"Yes."

"I am glad of it. This letter tells me that Dudley is not dead, but——"

She turned pale. "Not dead!" "No. He will give us more trouble still. He is in England. He went to search for a boy labourer, who had enlisted. That boy had seen you with her, too. Who knows what he could tell?"

"And he found him?"

"You may be easy—no. He had died from a sunstroke, and his story with him, whatever it was. It would not tell against you, for your share took place in your own heart."

"This is fiendish," said Jessica.

"Deny it—swear!"

"You shall acquit me first from your knowledge of me."

"I cannot."

She went away, torn with a secret struggle. A cold kiss was their parting salute. As he sat there alone on that evening, it came back on him suddenly how much a failure his pompously-planned life had turned out; with all his magnificently-planned schemes, which were to regulate events to *his* ends, as a sort of providence; even that boasted choice of a wife made with such a flourish! How *this* had broken down. A miserable failure indeed—he and his works.

Inaction of this sort, and with such thoughts, he could not endure: and suddenly a strange idea came into his head, and he felt himself irresistibly drawn down to that old fatal St. Arthur's-on-the-Sea, to be in its atmosphere, wander about those scenes, and perhaps stumble on something that might quiet his uneasy soul. In a moment he had decided, hurriedly packed a few things, and was presently in the train.

By the time he reached St. Arthur's it was evening. He had a dismal, weary journey down, with no company but his own thoughts, and when he arrived the place had a strange look, as if he had not seen it for years. As his eye fell on the church, he thought of the monument within; and it suddenly flashed on him that that was the very anniversary week of the death of the young heiress of Panton. This seemed to him very strange and singular, and the same fascination which had brought him down drew him out to those pleasant grounds near the river, which he had never yet had courage to visit.

It was a beautiful evening, and the sun was just setting as he reached the bank of the river, at the point where the bridge—that fatal Bridge of Sighs, as he called it to himself—had once stood. There was the little stone cross which marked the spot

where the young girl had fallen. As he stood there looking at it, the struggle of the two women, developed foolishly out of trifles, and closed by such a catastrophe, opened out before him. The more he thought of it, the more he looked back, the more it was rung in his ear, like the jangling of some hoarse bell: "Yes, she did it. It was beyond one of her character to resist. She would have said to herself—I can hear her saying it—'This is the chastising hand of Heaven. Why should I interfere? She herself has cut off the means which might have saved her, I shall make no extra exertion.' I asked her to swear, but no, that could not clear her. An eye-witness alone would convince me."

He lingered on until it darkened gradually. Below, in the town and harbour, he saw lights beginning to twinkle. Then he thought it time to return. As he advanced to go, he said, half aloud: "It is a deserved punishment, and I shall never see it cleared up."

A low voice near him said: "No clearing up is wanting. What more clear proof do you require?"

He knew that voice, and saw Dudley standing near him. Dudley, much changed, grown aged, and worn, and hollow cheeked, with fires burning in his eyes, and a strange, wild, and fitful manner, that alarmed Conway. "You wonder where I have come from. Not from that earth"—pointing to the cross—"where I wish I was laid. I have been spirited across from that house, where we all had so much happiness. What would you say if I crossed on that bridge, a spectral one, which led to such misery? I tell you I see it there now, its lines and network, as plainly as I see you. This was a fitting opportunity for us to meet here. If not, I was going to look for you. We only want *her*, and then, with the spirit of that poor saint, which, I believe, never deserts this place, our company would be complete!"

In a moment the other saw that Dudley was under some excitement, that looked like derangement. Yet he continued to speak collectedly. "You see, I have come back. I would not miss this anniversary. Yes, I have returned unsuccessful. I searched everywhere, but could not find what I wanted. At last I discovered that he was dead, else I would have brought that witness home, and made him confront her—your wife—on this very spot. Where is she now?" Conway was silent.

"I understand," said the other. "We understood each other before. You have

come to see the light at last, to know her in her true colours! Oh, it was a black crime! She is as guilty as any wretch that has been sentenced and suffered punishment. Is it fair or just that she is to escape? Tell me that!"

"You take too harsh a view of Jessica's behaviour."

"It is your view also. You know it, and cannot deny it. Her proud spirit knows it also, and she will not stay with you because you will not acquit her. And I tell you, Conway, you must not; you *dare* not. It is the only expiation we can offer now. She must be punished now, and by you. By-and-by I will reckon with her."

Every instant he was growing more and more excited, and his hand clutched Conway's arm with fiercer and fiercer energy. The latter saw that his companion was scarcely safe company at that hour and place, and tried to soothe him.

"Let us go back now," he said, "it is growing late."

"Leave this spot, and on this day—the day she died! Don't you remember it now? It must be consecrated by some offering. Oh, if she were here. Murderess! murderess!"

Conway, growing more and more alarmed every instant, tried to calm him. The other went on, with a sort of fury:

"You had your part in the business also, and you have only your escape by sacrificing her. Up to this you have done well; but if I see you attempt to interfere between me and her, it will be your turn next. She is a murderess. You know she is!"

"We shall settle all that later. You will judge her more generously yet. We may have done her wrong."

"Take care, take care, Conway," Dudley said, turning furiously on him. "You are not secure yourself. And if she tells me to reckon with you, it shall be done, and nothing shall save you. Do you think that you are innocent? You, with your heartless trafficking with her dear affections; you that were going to patch up your battered fortunes by sacrificing her happiness. It amused you, and profited you, and in a man of lower birth would be called the act of a scoundrel."

The other's face flushed up. "You can scarcely know the force of what you are saying. She knew very well the mixed motives that led me to that choice, and a share of her preference for me was owing to dislike of Jessica."

"You slanderer! You low slanderer! This finishes it. What you say is false—

false as your own double dealing self. You dare add this to the rest; finish all by meanly libelling her who you and yours drove into the grave. Curses on you! Curses on myself, that I stood by and let all this happen! It will drive me mad."

Conway drew back hastily; he saw that Dudley was in a paroxysm. Foam was on his lips, his eyeballs bursting from his head, his arms struck out. As Conway walked away, Dudley's hands clutched at him, and then tottering, he muttered, "Help! help across the bridge!" and fell slowly and stiffly to the ground. His head struck against the base of the little cross, and from a gash blood began to flow. Conway saw with terror that the unhappy madman was lying at his feet motionless, and apparently lifeless.

All was still. No one was near, and it was now perfectly dark. What was he to do—where rush for help? Dudley had gasped out something about the bridge; but it was a spectral one across his own brain. Conway knew not what to do. Help could be got from the house; but how was he to cross? All that was left for him was to start off with all speed for the village, and there get assistance. As he hurried along, strange thoughts came upon him, which alarmed him not a little. What if Dudley should be dying there, and it should be known that he had been with him? The dislike of Dudley to him and to Jessica, the incautious language he would use, and his strange, ill-regulated temper, would give the idea that a quarrel had taken place. The blood—the cut! And the idea made him shrink. Should he go back, or go on? At that moment the unhappy Dudley might be dead, or dying. And then he recollected that he had not taken even the most ordinary steps of precaution; that he had not raised him, or even loosed his collar. He stopped again and again irresolutely, but still hurried on after a moment's delay, and at last got near the village which was at the gate of Panton Castle.

He crossed the stone bridge, and stopped there a moment to take breath, looking up the river, which stretched away in a straight line for a mile and more. As he leaned against the parapet, it all flashed upon him in a moment. SHE WAS INNOCENT! By some strange coincidence, the very incidents of her crisis had been almost exactly repeated in his case. He almost gave a cry of joy at the thought. Others might surely judge him as he had judged her: there might be no earthly witness on whom he might call to come and

clear *him*, as there was none to clear her. Though circumstances might be against *him*; though all the world might point to him and denounce him; though he might at least have to journey through the rest of his life with a cloud of dark suspicion attending him, and the black shadows of imputed guilt cast behind him, still would he disdain to justify himself, to say a single word in his defence, precisely as she had done.

He had pitilessly called on her for proof, which she could not give, and disdainfully rejected the proof from her own noble and magnanimous soul; and he felt humiliated to think that should any suspicion or embarrassment come of what had taken place, or should she take the place of his silent accuser, he could only justify himself by appealing to his own conscience and to his own character. Still, Heaven be thanked for sending him this revelation, and for letting him see—as clearly as he now saw those stars shining in the heavens above him, and that moon which was now stealing far behind a cloud—that Jessica was innocent, and that she was his again. Whatever befell him, he longed to cast himself at her feet, and own the injustice that he had done her.

CHAPTER THE LAST.

WHEN they returned with assistance they found Dudley alive, but still insensible, and one of the men, casting about as to where it would be best to take him, reported that there was a boat moored close by under the bank, in which he must have come across from the castle. The doctor of the place said, quickly:

"We should have gained a precious half hour if you had just rowed across and fetched some one from the castle yonder."

Again a silent reproach struck into Conway's heart like a sword, for he himself, but more sternly and pitilessly, had made the same speech to another.

"I did not know of it," he all but faltered.

"Why, you can see it actually from this spot," said the doctor, one of the old "scum" of the place, who had before now resented Conway's haughty treatment of him in the old days. "Had you any quarrel with him?"

They placed Dudley in the boat, and carried him across to the castle. There the usual violent remedies were applied, those with which, in such desperate cases, the battle is fought out with the King of

Terrors. The struggle went on for hours, and then, about midnight, they told Conway that there was a gleam of hope. By morning it was known that Dudley's life was safe; but there were symptoms of lunacy that seemed incurable.

Conway went back into the town, and there met the doctor. The whole story was by this time all over the place.

"What is all this?" he said, austere. "A very awkward business, indeed. You should have restrained yourself. We all knew here the man was not accountable for his actions. We all set him down for the past week as unsound in mind. You should have restrained yourself."

Conway would have replied warmly, but he seemed to hear his own voice accusing Jessica, and was silent. He, indeed, longed to go and cast himself at her feet.

By that evening he had found her, and made his confession. By that evening the strange, yet noble nature had accepted that tardy reparation. Together they shaped out plans for a new life. The old, by their own consent, was too humiliating to look back to. They owned to each other that a fatal pride of intellect, a contempt for the average natures about them, with an almost arrogant purpose of shaping the common course of events about them to their ends and purposes, had been the cause of the wretched series of mistakes which had distracted their joint course of life since the day when he had sailed into the little port of St. Arthur's. Any obstinate self-assertion, any violent shaping of the course of events, the natures of others, the diversion of the current of life to their own private ends, this foolish theory had completely broken down, and was gone for ever, with the fatal Bridge of Sighs.

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